

## APPENDIX B

### *Specifications for Riparian Forest Buffer Establishment*

This section will detail the specific restoration criteria necessary for the Commonwealth to count a project as a viable riparian forest buffer or other buffer. *All riparian buffers established beginning January 1, 1996 will be tabulated but only those meeting the following criteria will count towards Virginia's goal of 610 miles of riparian forest buffer and ultimately the entire Bay goal of 2010 miles by the year 2010.*

The following specifications constitute a “countable” riparian forest buffer:

- All intermittent and perennial channels excluding man-made ditches
- All riparian forest buffers must be at least 35 feet on one side of the watercourse or meet the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standard for that site. For both sides to be counted as buffered, then the total width must be at least 70 feet or meet the NRCS standard.
- Riparian forest buffer averaging is allowable as long as the stream does not meander outside the buffer zone.
- If the riparian forest buffer is established by planting, a minimum of two (2) species must be utilized, either two types of trees or one tree and one shrub.
- Plantings should ideally be *native, non-invasive woody trees and shrubs*. However, species such as certain hybrid poplars that have economic appeal, which grow quickly and can be harvested consistent with conservation guidelines, may be grown as well.
- Natural regeneration is acceptable. However, in cattle pasturing situations conservation measures such as alternative watering facilities, alternative sources of shade, and fencing are strongly encouraged to keep the livestock from degrading buffer areas and diminishing their effectiveness.
- If a substandard buffer width is present, enhancement through planting or natural regeneration is allowed and encouraged.

Appendix C shows Virginia's Riparian Buffer Inventory Form. Riparian forest buffer restoration will be counted twice a year and tabulated to track progress toward the 610 mile goal.